



NEW COMPANY LAUNCHED TO PROMOTE LONDON'S GENETIC RESEARCH CAPABILITY

CEO appointed to head London Genetics

London, 12 December 2006 ... London Genetics, a specialist agency created to facilitate partnerships between industry and academic centres of excellence in genetics and genomics-based research across London, is to be launched today at the Genesis meeting (the UK's largest biotechnology networking conference).

London Genetics is a unique organisation that has been formed from a consortium of seven world-renowned medical research institutes to generate and manage partnerships between leading academic and clinical researchers and the biotech and pharmaceutical industries.

London Genetics' partners are King's College London; University College London, Imperial College London, Queen Mary, St George's, University of London, The London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene and The Institute of Cancer Research. The Company, limited by guarantee, is funded by the London Development Agency.

A key strength of London Genetics is its ability to commission multi-centre studies through its partners and provide a point of contact for companies seeking to carry out genetics and genomics-based studies in London. Using its specialist subject knowledge and extensive networks, London Genetics can meet accurately the requirements of its customers in areas such as access to large, well characterised, clinical cohorts; translational research; pharmacogenetics; DNA diagnostics and high-throughput genomics. In addition, London Genetics has access to cutting edge technologies, research methods and expertise in bioinformatics, data handling and analysis.

The launch of London Genetics also sees the appointment of Professor Nick Lench as its first Chief Executive Officer.

Professor Lench, said: "London is a leading world centre for research in clinical, molecular and medical genetics and genomics having a huge number of researchers and practitioners in the field, as well as a first-class track record in gene discovery, genetic disease diagnosis and treatment. The vision for London Genetics is to offer its customers a gateway to London's world class genetics and genomics capabilities through its partner institutions."

Professor Stephen Smith, Chair of the Board of London Genetics, and Principal of the Faculty of Medicine at Imperial College London said: "Professor Lench's appointment as CEO of London Genetics will be absolutely crucial to the success of the Company. He

has a huge amount of experience across both the academic and business sectors, and I am sure this will prove invaluable in fostering partnerships between the two.”

Before joining London Genetics, Professor Lench was Director of the Wales Gene Park and Chief Executive of Cardiff Institute of Tissue Engineering and Repair. The Wales Gene Park, one of the six UK Genetics Knowledge Parks, was created to link academic and clinical expertise from across Wales, providing a research-led environment facilitating translational research, the innovative delivery of medical genetics services, commercialisation and technology development, and the engagement of the public in education and debate on issues surrounding genetics. Professor Lench was also actively involved in the IP management, technology transfer, licensing and commercialisation of genetics technologies and was a member of Cardiff University's Commercial Advisory Panel.

Prior to this, Professor Lench was Programme Director at Oxagen Ltd., a leading UK-based biotechnology company focused in genetics, where he was responsible for Inflammation Biology and Discovery Genetics. As a member of the Senior Management Team, he was responsible for Research Strategy, the establishment of strategic collaborations with academics and commercial partners, business development, patent filing and intellectual property portfolio management

Professor Lench studied for his PhD at St Mary's Hospital Medical School, London contributing to the mapping and cloning the gene for cystic fibrosis. After two years as a postdoctoral research associate at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, he returned to the UK as Lecturer in Molecular Genetics at the University of London. Following the award of a MRC Research Fellowship, Professor Lench moved to the Molecular Medicine Unit at St. James's University Hospital, Leeds where he established his own research group mapping and cloning genes for hereditary hearing impairment and neurodevelopmental disorders.

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About London Genetics

Formed from a consortium of leading London universities and research institutes, London Genetics Limited is a specialist agency created to facilitate partnerships between industry and world class academic centres of excellence in genetic and genomic-based research across London.

The Company's goal is to become the first point of contact for anyone looking to conduct basic research, translational research or clinical studies in London. It aims to expedite the translation of genetic or genomic-based research into clinical benefit, demonstrating the commercial value of genetics.

London Genetics is funded by the London Development Agency and is an equal partnership between Imperial College London, Kings College London, UCL, Queen Mary University of London, St George's Medical School, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and Institute of Cancer Research.

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